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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 TASHKENT 001520

SIPDIS

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DEPT FOR SCA/CEN, DRL, AND G/TIP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/21/2017

TAGS: [KCRM](#) [KWMN](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [UZ](#)

SUBJECT: TIP: PROPOSED PROJECTS TO ENGAGE THE GOVERNMENT

REF: A. TASHKENT 1512

[1](#)B. TASHKENT 1419

Classified By: CDA BRAD HANSON FOR REASONS 1.4 (B, D).

[1](#)1. This is an Action Request; see Para 6

[1](#)2. (C) Post has experienced greater transparency, cooperation, and engagement with the Uzbeks on TIP matters during the last six weeks than in the past two years. We believe that imposing sanctions at this point will only serve to discourage further engagement of the GOU with us on TIP and other human rights issues. For this reason, we are now proposing additional steps the USG can take with the GOU and NGOs to advance our shared anti-TIP objectives in Uzbekistan. The US and Uzbekistan may now have a rare opportunity to advance our shared anti-TIP objectives.

[1](#)3. (C) In July, Post presented the MFA with a five-step TIP action plan which called on the Government to demonstrate significant efforts in combating trafficking to have its Tier Three ranking reassessed and avoid the imposition of sanctions. By the August 12 deadline, the Government partly fulfilled three of the five steps of the action plan by: 1) drafting a new law on combating trafficking, 2) drafting criminal code amendments that increase penalties for convicted traffickers, and 3) ensuring regular meetings for the interagency anti-trafficking working group. We believe that the Government will complete these three steps by the end of the year by introducing and passing the TIP legislation in Parliament. In addition, the Government has at least addressed the remaining two points of the action plan by providing assistance to 20 trafficking victims at shelters, drafting a new law on labor migration, and signing bilateral labor migration agreements with Russia that call for increased protection for Uzbek labor migrants.

[1](#)4. (C) In order to promote continued engagement with the Government, Post proposes the following TIP-related projects for Uzbekistan. We have listed our ideas below, divided by whether they would involve the participation of the Government, non-governmental organizations or a combination of the two. We also have developed a few project ideas that could be implemented solely by Post.

#### Projects Involving Government Participation:

-- On July 31, Post invited government officials and NGO practitioners for a viewing of the film "Human Trafficking." The film was very well received by all in attendance, and afterwards, MFA representatives inquired whether it would be

possible to broadcast the movie on (state-controlled) Uzbek television (ref B). If the Department could secure the broadcasting rights for "Human Trafficking," Post could approach the Government again about showing it on Uzbek television

-- Post could use International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) program funds to send officials from the anti-trafficking working group to the United States or a third country, such as Bahrain or Israel, for TIP-related training.

-- Likewise, Post could send law enforcement officials for a course on trafficking at the Central European and Eurasian Law Initiative (CEELI) Institute or International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA), both in Budapest.

-- Currently, visitors to Tashkent International Airport are greeted by posters about avian influenza. Post could approach the Government about hanging similar posters on trafficking at airport departure points, as many trafficking victims from Uzbekistan are transported by air.

-- At an appropriate time, G/TIP officers could visit Uzbekistan to discuss with the Government how it could strengthen its anti-trafficking efforts.

#### Projects Involving Non-Governmental Organizations' Participation:

-- The USG could donate the old chancery building to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to use as a shelter or vocational center for trafficking victims. Currently, Uzbekistan only has two shelters: one in Tashkent

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and the other in Bukhara. The current one in Tashkent is small and overcrowded. To repair and make the old Chancery usable, however, several hundred thousand dollars in additional funding would be required.

-- Post could support IOM and local NGOs in opening new shelters in areas with high numbers of trafficking victims, such as Samarkand or the Ferghana Valley.

-- Instead of supporting the creation of new shelters, Post could fund the provision of legal support, vocational training and medical and psychological counseling for victims at existing shelters.

#### Projects Involving Government and Non-Governmental Organizations' Participation:

-- In conjunction with the opening of a new shelter for trafficking victims, Post could propose a cost-share to the Government. For example, Post could agree to pay for the shelter's overhead if the Government will pay for its services, including legal support, vocational training and medical and psychological counseling for trafficking victims.

-- With the support of provincial administrations and IOM's partner NGOs, Post could arrange for the showing of "Human Trafficking" at venues across the country. Post also could invite officials from the Department of Homeland Security's Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), which is depicted in the film, to talk to regional law enforcement officials and others about their real-life experiences on trafficking cases.

-- Post could send leaders of IOM's partner NGOs and their Government counterparts to the United States on an International Visitors (IV) program that focuses on anti-trafficking efforts in the United States. Although Post

recently sent NGO participants on TIP-related IV programs, we believe that it would be worthwhile to arrange another TIP-related IV program if the participation of Government officials could be secured. Given the high level of Government engagement on TIP recently, we believe that this may be possible.

-- Post, along with officials and NGO partners, could arrange a series of TIP-related events commemorating International Day for the Abolition of Slavery on December 2. This date has been used by international organizations to raise awareness of human trafficking as a form of modern-day slavery.

-- Post could organize a Digital Video Conference with trafficking experts in the United States or other countries. Both government officials and NGO practitioners could be invited to attend.

-- After the showing of "Human Trafficking" at the Embassy, several audience members requested to borrow the movie. Post could purchase additional copies of the DVD to share with international organizations, NGOs and government officials

#### Projects that could be Initiated by Post Alone:

-- If broadcast rights could be secured, Post could arrange for the broadcasting of "Human Trafficking" on a regional Russian-language channel or satellite.

-- Post could produce awareness-raising leaflets on trafficking which can be included in Post's "Dostlik" newsletter mailings.

15. (C) Comment: By pursuing some of the TIP-related projects listed above, Post could encourage continued Government engagement on TIP and support cooperation between officials and NGO practitioners. We believe that pursuing such projects at this point is much more likely to elicit further efforts from the Government to combat trafficking than applying sanctions against Uzbekistan. End Comment.

16. (C) Action Request: Post requests feedback from SCA and G/TIP regarding the feasibility and desirability of the TIP-related projects proposed in this cable. Post further requests that SCA explore the possibility of negotiating broadcast rights for the Lifetime film "Human Trafficking" in Uzbekistan and obtaining 15-120 copies of the film with

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Russian subtitles to distribute to NGOs, international organizations and government bodies. End Request  
HANSON